PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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- Raymond W. Miller, whose article—"What a Farm Scarcity Might Cost Us"—appears on Pages 12-13, was formerly a consultant on FAO affairs (Food and Agriculture Organization). He is now on the faculty of the Harvard School of Business Administration, is a walnut grower, and a world traveler.
- For the story of the Americus Work Camp in Kansas, see Page 14.
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Religious Division

EDWARD D. HAMNER

• Religious division is much more serious in rural communities than in the larger towns and cities. Larger places have numerous "religious communities"—congregations which have a largely self-sufficient social life within themselves. As separate churches they go their own way, often with no more than nominal expressions of friendship for other churches—even of their own denominations—and with little obvious conflict with other churches, however diverse their doctrines or practices.

In the small rural community the situation is quite different. Everybody knows everybody else, and practically all activities are on a community basis except religion. The several small churches, in a limited population, are competing with one another for the attendance, the loyalty, and the financial support of the community.

Those which suffer in this competition find "rational" reasons for fighting back—showing that the others are untrue to the Bible in doctrine or practice, and on the basis of the emphasis of a few points of difference, seeking to gain support from the people of the community. The change of a child from one Sunday school to another, a family who is slighted in one church and goes to another, a marriage by which one church loses a member while another gains, a prospering youth meeting in one church which draws youth from other churches—all arouse suspicion and animosity.

The persistence of denominational churches in rural communities, when one or two churches would suffice, is often justified on varied grounds. Whether valid or not, they include such matters as the following:

1. John Lawson, British Methodist, says, in *Green and Pleasant Land,* "The many small (churches) . . . provide alike the opportunity and the pressing call for the rank and file to enter into office. Folk of limited gifts will do this, when perhaps they would not venture into a larger and better staffed concern. If there is genuinely no one else to do it, a simple village girl will often undertake the Sunday school, in fear and trembling, and 'learn by doing' . . . 'Doing things' in the church helps these folk feel that they 'belong,' and therefore cements loyalty."

2. From another viewpoint: There are varied types of people, having varied needs, in every community. The differences come about from varied family backgrounds, widely different levels of education, different occupations, opportunities, inherent capacities, and from the personal experiences they have in home and community. This is true in both rural and urban life. In the urban community, people more easily choose the church that best fits their needs. They may select an Episcopal church, or an Assembly of God. In either case, neither interferes with the other.

But in the small rural community, to select one is to turn against the other. While people's needs are varied, we try to get various types of people into *one* church. It is the nature of Christianity that, in the spirit of Christ, this should be done. But it is in the nature of man that he becomes so rigid in doctrine and

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A "little" Church in Everett, Pa.

(*Continued from Page* 1)

practices that he tends to exclude others from his fellowship. Or, lacking insight and flexibility, the leadership of the church is unable to provide for varied types of people. Each church appeals to *one* group, and others go to another church. Before real Christian union can succeed in the rural community, we will have to learn how to overcome our own narrowness and exclusiveness. Christianity is broad enough for everybody; it is *we* who are narrow, and so produce denominationalism.

And this denominationalism is serious in our small communities because we are in competition with each other, instead of being in cooperation—which we could be.

Usually, in our small rural communities, one church provides one kind of worship, and in other ways fits the people who like this manner of worship, while another church is quite different. John Lawson gives his reasons for justifying denominationalism on the basis of differences of worship. His arguments carry some weight. But the question arises, Why cannot the church provide for varieties of worship, within one congregation?

In time our Christian insight will probably lead us to ways of overcoming these divisions, while we meet the basic needs of all types of people. In the meantime, we should not be satisfied with the indiscriminate "union" of all sorts of people with all their varied needs into one mould of thought or worship or practice, or with the fragmentation of the Body of Christ, which simply represents our failures to face and meet the problem of varying human needs.

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The 20th Cooperative Congress

• "The gravest danger we face in our society today is the loss of moral and religious idealism." This was among the concluding remarks made by Jerry Voorhis, executive director of the Cooperative League of the U.S.A., Chicago, in the report made to the 20th biennial Cooperative Congress convened by the League. This was, said Mr. Voorhis, "the most important part" of his report.

The Congress celebrated in Chicago, October 24-26, 1956, the 40th anniversary of the founding of the League as a national, educational and service agency of consumer and purchasing cooperatives. The national League was begun in 1916, largely through the work of Dr. J. P. Warbasse, then a prominent surgeon in New York, who found in consumer cooperation a technique that he wished to advance in order to cope with the ills of society.

Mr. Voorhis went on to say to 250 delegates from many types of cooperatives and to many visitors: "People are lost—intellectually, morally, spiritually, politically, and in the long run economically—unless they are able to relate what they do and the pattern of their lives to some eternal truth, some pattern of life as it was intended to be."

The League has lately expanded its technical and management services to cooperatives so that they may become "better-run businesses." This is a necessary objective, said Mr. Voorhis. But the purpose of cooperatives is larger and broader. The significance of an efficient cooperative business "is to be measured not alone by the increases in volume or net services which result, but even more by the depth of that commitment to the moral idealism of cooperation that permeates and motivates those businesses.

"Only those who have understood, accepted and given lasting devotion in the ideal of cooperation among free people built on user-ownership can build successful businesses that

an also restore to confused and fearful people a sense of meaning and purpose in their everyday economic lives in these perilous times."

The delegates were then asked by Mr. Voorhis to further "the revival of moral idealism and the rebirth of spiritual challenge in our society."

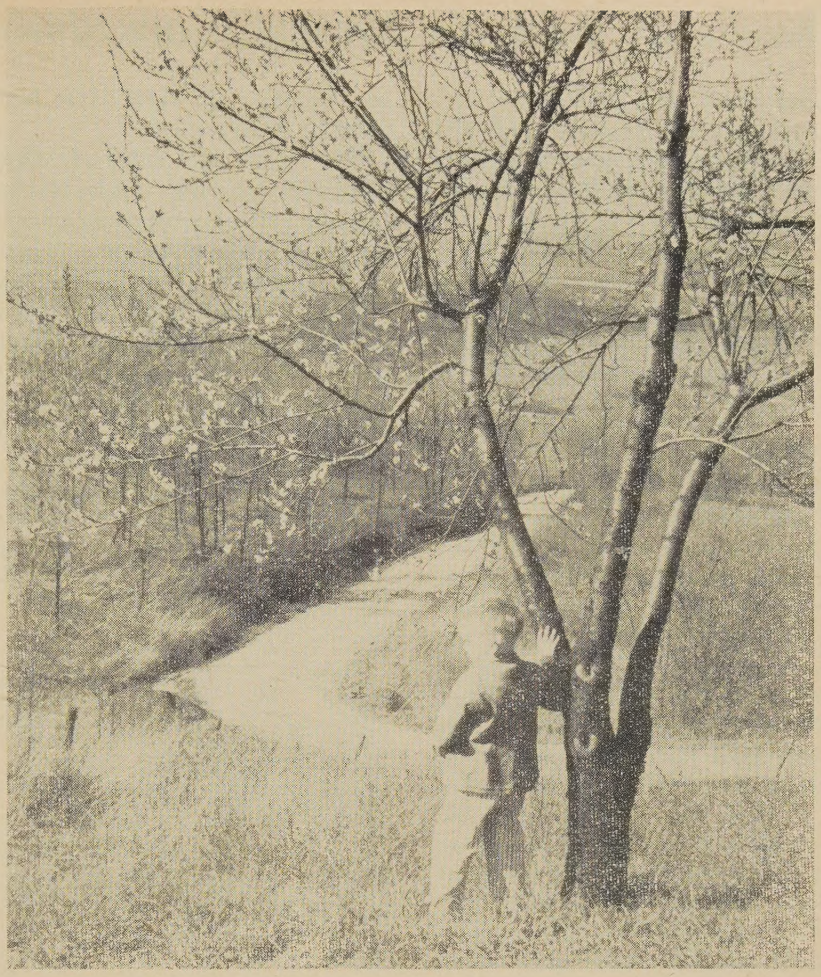
Credit unions are being organized at the rate of 1,500 a year, the Congress was told. Farmers marketing cooperatives now handle about 24 per cent of farm crops and livestock, the highest percentage on record. Housing cooperatives increase in number, especially with the cooperation of organized labor, in the New York metropolitan area. Cooperatives were described as a means whereby "little people" can own and control economic goods and services. Some cooperatives were described as large enough to be "yardsticks" that will help to "transform our society into a pattern far more akin to America's traditional ideal."

The delegates favored a school lunch program for every child, food stamps for "any person whose annual income is below the level of health and decency, and the use of our surplus food to raise living standards abroad." They adopted a lengthy tax policy statement, opposing sales taxes on necessities, and favoring eventual elimination of the federal corporation income tax.

Legislative interference with the people's liberties is worse than ever before in this country's history, Homer P. Rainey, professor of education at Colorado University, told the Congress. Murray D. Lincoln of Nationwide Insurance Company, president of the League and of CARE, urged a world conference of cooperatives on atomic energy, in part to prevent the new atomic energy agency being set up by the United Nations from becoming "simply an agency of big power politics."

"The aim of cooperatives is the good life," the Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. G. Ligutti, executive director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, said in an address. "One of the greatest contributions is the discovery and use of hidden forces, for oneself and for society."

—B. Y. L.



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Prayer at the Beginning of Spring

• Ever-blessed God, Creator and Father of us all, we praise Thee for the miracle of springtime. We hear thy voice calling forth new life all around us: in the latent, barren trees; in the dried and withered grass; in the return of birds of song.

Grant us the grace, O Lord, to respond to the urge of new life and beauty. Help us to see the indifference and sullenness that make ugly, barren patches in our lives. By thy spirit, remove the rocks of jealousy and pride and selfishness that crowd out the seeds of abundant living. Make our lives so productive of the joy, love and peace for which our world hungers that we may hasten the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. In the spirit of Christ, we pray. *Amen.*

—William Webster

Rural Life Sunday

• Rural Life Sunday, the fifth after Easter, or Rogation Sunday, will be held on May 26th this year.

The Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches has published an Order of Service for use by a congregation. It has been prepared for the Department by the Rev. Dale W. Medearis, director of town and country church work for the Disciples of Christ.

Copies may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates: Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies or more, $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.

The Farm Bureau's Annual Convention

• About 6,000 farm people attended the various sessions of the 38th annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation at Miami Beach, Florida, December 9-14, 1956.

In addressing the company, President Charles B. Shuman said: "The AFBF has within its membership three-fourths of all organized farmers . . . from the 48 states and Puerto Rico." It has local and county units "in practically every rural area of the United States. . . ."

Mr. Shuman said that "the recent national election demonstrated that farmers' votes are not for sale." Current farm programs, while steps in the right direction, are not adequate for dealing with long-range problems. Good farming in the future requires that the individual farmer shall have "freedom to change"; that farmers shall have opportunity "to accumulate capital and to own property"; that the search for new knowledge shall go on; that aggressive efforts be made to expand markets at home and abroad. Mr. Shuman approved the federal government fiscal policies that have caused interest rates to rise and made for restriction of credit.

The Farm Bureau is the representative of "more family-type farmers —by any definition you choose— than all other farm organizations," said Roger Fleming, secretary-treasurer of the AFBF. The family-type farm becomes larger, "but it is still the most efficient pattern of economic organization on the farms of the United States." Among the approaches disapproved by Mr. Fleming, because they would destroy opportunity for the family farm, are a steeply graduated land tax, minimum allotments of production per farm, and the setting of a maximum limit on the price supports or other government payments to any one individual.

The official delegates to the annual meeting adopted "the national policies," which refer not only to agriculture but also to many issues in international affairs, labor, education, social security, etc. On most farm issues the leaders of the AFBF and Secretary of Agriculture Benson seem to be in accord.

The AFBF is in favor of technical assistance to the underdeveloped nations and of continuing executive authority to negotiate reciprocal trade agreements (including "agreements to reduce trade barriers"). It recommends support for the proposed Organization for Trade Cooperation. General approval is given to the United Nations. The AFBF favors specific appropriations by the United States directly to the specialized agencies. It opposes universal military training and favors continuation of the present Selective Service program as a supplement to voluntary enlistment.

Under "National Resources" it is stated: "We believe that private ownership and operation of the nation's land resources is in the national interest in most instances." The AFBF favors "reasonable acreage limitation on federal irrigation projects involving the development of new lands" with no reference to the traditional 160-acre limitation. "Such limitations should emphasize high productivity per farm family rather than the placement of the maximum number of families."

Favorable words are said of the Tennessee Valley Authority, adding "we believe the present service area should not be extended."

"A general federal sales tax should be avoided. . . . All corporations should be exempted from federal income taxes on earnings distributed to stockholders as dividends and taxable in the hands of stockholders. . . . We continue to oppose aggressively any effort to tax cooperatives on savings returned to member patrons in such form as to be taxable in their hands." Rural electrification cooperatives and other non-profit utilities should continue to have first claim on power produced on federal projects.

The AFBF recommends that "state farm bureau support state right-to-work laws. . . ." The AFBF believes that industry-wide bargaining "should be prohibited."

"We oppose expanded federal aid to education. . . . We are opposed to federal aid to community library projects. . . . We are . . . opposed to vast expansion of public housing, with distribution of federal funds for this purpose. . . . Our opposition to compulsory coverage of self-employed farm operators under the Old Age and Survivors Insurance program is not diminished by the action of Congress in extending coverage to them. We favor a program of voluntary participation."

—B. Y. L.

Schwenkfelder Farmer Speaking

• In the course of a series of poems under the general title, *The Church in the Heart,* Millen Brand writes a poem, "Josephus Gerhard," recording a conversation with a farmer with this name, aged 95. He is one of the Schwenkfelders, a small and highly respected denomination in Eastern Pennsylvania. The closing lines of the poem, recording several local experiences, as published in *The Beloit Poetry Journal,* Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin, Vol. 5, No. 4, are as follows:

I was at the barber's
and they were talking about communities.
I said in ours we loved one another.
One said that could not be said
of any community anywhere.
I said, "Well, ours is that way."
As he thrusts his strong stick out,
he repeats, "Yes, ours is that way."

Mark Rich on "The Larger Parish"

• Mark Rich's study, "The Larger Parish, an Effective Organization for Rural Churches," is now available for distribution. Cornell University first published this document in 1939 —it was out of print for some time —then Cornell granted the author permission to reprint his record of the Movement. Mark Rich, in this booklet, presents a History of the Larger Parish, tells how it functions, and gives the Principles and Procedure of Organization. "The Larger Parish" may be procured from Dr. Mark Rich, Lowry Hall, Columbia, Missouri, for 20 cents per copy; 100 or more copies, 12 cents each.

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Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Mark Van Doren's "In That Far Land"

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• The poet Mark Van Doren, who was born in Hope, Illinois, has published a brochure, *In That Far Land*, in which he gives many of his recollections of persons and places in small communities of the Middle West. Mr. Van Doren is a philosophical poet who writes with the restraint of a man of wisdom. He is a mellow man as he writes of people and fields.

Professor Van Doren teaches at Columbia University, has reviewed many works of poetry, has published volumes of poetry and also of criticism. He has also compiled anthologies. Louis Untermeyer writes of Mr. Van Doren: "His touch is fine and his sensibility pronounced in lines that are casual but never commonplace." He has been a student of both Thoreau and of Frost. Among his great labors has been a compilation of selections of the world's best poetry.

The collection, *In That Far Land*, contains seventeen poems. In them Mr. Van Doren muses on his experience with Middle Western corn. He gives conversations with relatives, including a long talk with an uncle, "The Uncle I Was Named For." Two deal with local passenger trains. Mr. Van Doren occasionally celebrates, often explores, and often goes into the philosophical poetry for which he is well-known. He is a man of maturity confronting Hope, Illinois, and other small places in the Middle West.

In "The Merry Trainman," who is on the Indianapolis local, Mr. Van Doren interprets the man in blue interested in every person in every seat. "How is Crops?"

. . . . And the coach, creaking among cornfields,
Bears on the summer rails his chosen people, smiling,
Seat by seat he ministers, this Mercury,
This clown of the blue cloth, while overhead the high planes
Hum, with kings in them, or queens for all he cares.

This is from "Edge of Town: Indiana:"

Windy spring wakes color up.
See? The green blood returns, and stains
Hedges and hills; and wanton meadows
Wave at the windows of great trains.

In "The Path Out of Town," the poet speculates on the significance of the way that "absently winds," and how "history determines how we take the hill."

No way is straight, so this one wanders
As the first wind did, and the feet,
Obedient, that bending wove,
In the still grass, thought's little street.

There is another poem on trains, emphasizing a different aspect from that in "The Merry Trainman." One can be a person that the blue cap counts not.

To be on trains, perfection of alone: . . .
To be and not be numbered—let it go
Oh, anywhere, this absolute alone.

One entitled "Civilization" is about birds that maintain a little city on a high pole, organized so differently from a wilderness. Some sit reflective; others are coming and going. The opening lines are:

Before the eaves stop dripping, there they are,
Those martins. They come out of doors and sit.
They shake off showery drops. They almost hold
A hand out, testing the sun's intentions.

The winds of Douglas County blow steady and true. A few lines from "In Douglas County:"

How the first men here, setting forth,
Took their own faces for a guide.
Where the wind struck, on eye or temple—
That was southwest, and would abide.

Of a great tree remaining in a forgotten field, entitled "Single Majesty:"

Behold him, that great solitary
Tree in a forgotten field . . . .
That master of this meadow, bent
By nothing but strong wind . . . .
Behold him and forget him if you can,
That king
Of this lost meadow.

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The mechanization of corn-growing is remarked in "The Culture of Corn:"

The great machines that mouse these fields
In May, between the long dark showers—
How do they master and despise
The stick, the hoe that once were ours.

Another poem, "Granary" deals with the passing of the wooden corn crib, and the coming of the new-fangled types of heavy wire. The new ones seem to the poet to make a music that the old ones did not, as the wind goes through. Does the wind care if things are of wood or wire?

The tall new crib is woven steel:
A humming cylinder in wind— . . .
What did we say? Did something sing?
Does corn still blossom? Are there men?

The brochure, *In That Far Land*, published 1951, was designed and printed by Carroll Coleman at the Prairie Press, Iowa City, Iowa. The cover is named Winterstoke, and is hand made in England. $1.00 a copy.

"Dirt Farmer" Churchman Heads Maryland Farm Bureau

• W. Algie Cooksey, self-styled "dirt farmer," is the newly named president of the Maryland Farm Bureau. He is a man who believes "the Christian community is the answer to a lot of problems."

Mr. Cooksey, long-time parishioner and vestryman of Christ Episcopal Church in La Plata, Maryland, is a Washington diocese lay reader.

"It gives me a great deal of satisfaction to see the boys and girls I taught in Sunday school grow up to be God-fearing people and good citizens," the fifty-five-year-old farmer states.

Mr. Cooksey succeeds Wilson A. Heaps, president for the past six years.

Even if the time for action has gone by, the time for extracting a lesson from history is ever at hand for those who are wise.

—Demosthenes

Five Years in a Marginal Parish

HAROLD W. HECKMAN

(Mr. Heckman is minister of the Powder River Parish, Broadus, Montana)

I

It was not without misgivings that we accepted the call to this marginal parish. Our first night in Broadus was spent in the Powder River Hotel, a small, frame two-story building that stands on the corner where Highway 212 momentarily pierces the town; thence it stretches another eighty to a hundred miles in either direction across lonely grasslands and grotesquely eroded breaks before reaching another town.

It was Saturday evening, December 31, 1950. A New Year's celebration was under way; it was being celebrated in keeping with the mores of the town. In the early hours of the morning we were awakened by excited voices in the hotel lobby. Someone was shouting frantically into the telephone, the only telephone that connected this inland village with the outside world. But the call was of no avail. An auto accident had already claimed another life.

With this inauspicious introduction to the town, we began our ministry that has quickly stretched into five years. It has been a ministry that has taught us much and certainly has not been without its compensations. We have learned what can happen when necessary resources are brought to bear on a community through a so-called "marginal" church—the resources not only of local leadership and finances but also of the wisdom, the shared experience, and the constant interest of the larger Christian community, the denomination. For there have been frequent visits of our leaders on both the state conference and the national level. There has been a continuing contact, so we have not been alone in this Powder River Parish experiment. It has indeed been a cooperative effort in which the wisdom of the larger fellowship has made itself felt in a particular local situation.

Now after nearly five years of concentrated effort what observations can be made about this marginal parish that was designated a "parish of promise"? But first a bit describing the parish situation.

II

This is an area that we Congregationalists occupy by comity agreement. So, when we came, the county as a whole was assigned to us as our parish responsibility. It lays in the short-grass country of southeastern Montana. While there is some wheat farming here, for the most part this is cow country. Everywhere the Hereford and the Angus dot the sprawling landscape. Powder River Country is somewhat outsized, with an area of 3,285 square miles. Census figures show 472 ranches, with an average holding of 3,380 acres. So, with less than one person per square mile and only one town in the county, the problem of communication looms large.

But communicating the gospel is the work of the ministry as a whole. So, except for some external details, we did not feel our assignment was a unique one. Because of our particular geographic location, space was an additional factor with which to contend.

There is here space that separates people by twenty to forty miles from their neighborhood center. There are distances that put as much as seventy-five miles between a parish family and the parish church. But we soon discovered that there were also psychological barriers that sometimes separated people and neighborhoods. These barriers can be more real than geographical barriers. Thus one of our main efforts has been that of trying to create a sense of togetherness among our people. We have been faced with the prob-

lem of bringing more and more people under the leadership of one church without doing violence to their natural neighborhood and community grouping.

To begin with, we had to recognize the high financial cost of giving an adequate ministry in an area such as this. The problem is the same in our schools in this region. It is not unusual for a district to maintain a school and employ a teacher for three, four, or five pupils. The cost per child is extremely high, but there seems to be no satisfactory alternative. Our churches too are compelled to accept the fact that an effective ministry in the sparsely settled area will come high. We of the Great Plains have to cope in a particular way with this problem. We are striving to enlarge the area of service of each minister.

III

One of the characteristics of this parish is the lack of cultural distances between our people. Though a man may have to go several miles down the road to see his next-door neighbor or fifty miles to buy his groceries, when he gets there he knows he will meet people who speak his language. He knows that, like him, everyone about him is influenced by the same cycle of the changing seasons. With barometric sensitivity the spirit of these people rises or falls with a good cattle market or a dry spring.

So there is this cultural uniformity that diminishes social and religious differences. This lack of variation does not mean that all goes smoothly with these folk. But I would say that this community of people is as friendly as any community can be. There are points of tension and conflict, but certainly no violent eruptions or insurmountable cleavages. Differences do exist, but the neighborhood groups tend to minimize them.

Take the Coalwood "Ladies Aid," for example. Here is a neighborhood institution that actually antedates the local church organization. Further, it cuts across religious and sex lines, for both Protestants and Catholics, men and women, are loyal to the Aid. For forty years now, without interruption, the neighbors have laid down their work, at least one day a month, to go to Aid. On this day the families gather at one of the designated homes. After a bounteous "pitch-in" dinner, the group settles down to business. The men go to their penny-ante in the bunkhouse, the children scatter all over the place, and the women, after a short "devotional," turn to the business of planning their community affairs—charity projects, fund-raising, plays, and the like. Here, then, is demonstrated a sense of oneness and the all-inclusiveness of community activity.

A second characteristic I would mention is a sterility of ideas. Saying that there is a lack of diversity of ideas would perhaps offend our folk. But the fact remains that our community, an inland town eighty miles from the nearest railway, is out of the main stream of outside influences. It has some ingrown features. Further I would mention that Broadus has been subject to the same draining-off of human resources that characterizes the small town throughout all of the Great Plains region. With this movement has gone some of our finest minds and strongest personalities. So to say that a community is culturally starved need not be a reflection on its citizens. There are many factors that contribute to cultural malnutrition, and in the case of our town geographic isolation and population depletion are two of them.

Professor Brownell in his book *The Human Community* reports a comment made by Dr. Henry N. Weiman which I feel is descriptive of our situation:

"It is true that the small rural community people know one another as whole individuals so far as they know one another at all. But the trouble with people in the small rural community is that they do not respond to one another with diversified sensitivity. A shell forms about each individual, a shell of torpor, routine, and custom, allowing one to respond only to those matters which the tradition of that community has decreed are worth consideration. So people in such a community often live together like turtles, each sticking out his head to attend to matters only when they happen to fall within the narrow bounds of accepted concern. The great city has not only developed a mighty technology. It has broken the shell that narrows human interest."

Mr. Weiman does not go on to make a case for life in the city but points out that in all human groups, both urban and rural, there is need for diversity of ideas and widened sensitivity. That the mores of our town restrict and even discourage fresh and original ideas can hardly be denied.

We hold that one of the functions of our church in Powder River County is to counteract this characteristic sterility of ideas. We like to think that within a five-year period the church has in a small way penetrated this cultural narrowness.

A third characteristic I would mention of our people is this: There is a hunger for self-expression. I have been gratified many times over to see the eagerness with which our laymen have assumed responsibility when given a significant work to do. And it has made me realize afresh that people usually do not fall into a drab routine because they want to but because they are prisoners of their environment. To be fenced in or merely to think one is fenced in has the same result. We are prisoners either way.

When a fenced-in community of people can be helped to lose themselves in a common creative effort, they gain a new freedom and self-respect. When a challenge is given, people do respond. At least that has been our experience here. For example, when our parishioners saw that it was possible for them to create such a thing of enduring beauty as a new church edifice, there was an eager response. A thousand hours of volunteer labor and considerable wealth were poured into the project. It revealed the depth of the thirst for worthwhile expression on the part of this isolated group.

The church that our people built has turned out to be an architectural gem. It takes on an added significance because of its setting in this

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tiny hamlet out here in this rangeland wilderness.

When a minister accepts the responsibility of a small rural church, made up of people without wide cultural differences, without notable diversity of ideas yet responsive folk, hungry for self-expression, what can he expect to happen? Certainly the details are not the same in every situation, but I venture to say there can be a creative, productive relationship in each situation. It has been that for us during our five years here. Let me sum up the patterns that have evolved and some of the things that have taken place in our church program.

IV

To begin with, we have become a self-supporting church. This has added to the self-respect of our congregation. While the population of the area as a whole has changed little, our membership has doubled, and our annual budget is now quadruple of what it was five years ago. Among other things the parishioners make provision for travel costs for both the car and the parish airplane. About 20,000 miles of driving and 150 hours of flying is my yearly average.

Second, there has grown a real sense of mission. The town church feels responsible for services in the six surrounding points. Formerly the town families carried a major part of the financial load. Now we are reaching the point where these peripheral groups assume a fair share of the parish expense. There is also an enlightened sharing in the larger Christian World Mission program. Several foreign representatives have been on the field, and two displaced persons families have been rehabilitated by our church families.

Third, there is a matter that we take for granted in most of our churches, namely, a corps of church officers who know their jobs and take them seriously. By contrast I recall the situation as we found it when we arrived—a policy-making body of three trustees, none of whom was a church member.

Fourth, is a well-developed parish organization covering the whole county, integrating all the neighborhood worshiping centers around the "cathedral church" in Broadus. Statistics, membership rolls, and other records for the whole parish are kept at the center church. When individuals or families from any part of the county wish to join the church, they come to the parish church to be received but are expected to carry on their religious activities with the neighborhood group.

A program of regular services in each outlying field was established during the first year. The meeting place has been a schoolhouse, a community hall, or a home. Each neighborhood sends its duly elected delegates to the quarterly parish council meetings that are held in Broadus. Once a year the parish officers go as a caravan to visit each worshipping center. This deputation of a dozen people will drive a total of two thousand miles making this annual visitation.

Fifth, we have developed a "Church School by Mail" project. This course of study, based on "Pilgrim Series" material, prepared by local teachers, and supervised by our Religious Education Committee, is set up on a three-year cycle. An essential feature of our home-study work is the stress upon regular family participation in Bible readings, hymns, and prayers. Work sheets sent in from the homes are corrected, commented on, and then returned. To supplement this home-study work, daily vacation schools are conducted in each neighborhood. Six to eight such schools are carried on each year with the help of student summer service workers.

A significant development is the wide use of lay leaders in our parish program. There simply is no other way to keep an effective program moving in this sprawling parish. The result has been that a great deal of potential leadership has been discovered and developed. The current emphasis is on lay preaching. During the minister's absence services are of necessity led by lay volunteers. Within the year more than a dozen local men have conducted services.

Reference has already been made to the use of a small airplane. In a parish like this, where 275 families live scattered along a thousand miles of unimproved roadways, the aircraft is neither a luxury nor a novelty. It has been a tool of the rancher and townsman for many years. It can be an equally effective tool for the preacher-pilot. I would mention my colleague of the Flasher, North Dakota, Parish, the Reverend Charles Lee, as another who makes extensive use of the plane in his area. Much of our flying consists of short hops from ranch to ranch, giving us a link with our families that would otherwise be impossible.

I have also made mention of the new church plant that is fully and adequately equipped. That this $65,000 unit started when our membership was but a hundred reveals the pioneering spirit of these folk.

Along with these results one could enumerate some indirect results due to the church's concerted effort. For example, each year some of our young people are enrolling at our one church-related college in the region, Rocky Mountain College. We have at least one young man looking toward a vocation of full-time Christian service. A student summer service worker of four years ago has recently returned to this community to set up medical practice, becoming our first permanent, resident physician in the county in ten years. I am sure the church in this town can take some credit for these and many more indirect results.

There have been points at which we have been frustrated too. We came to this small town on the assumption that an alert church giving an enlightened ministry could for the most part meet the needs of the whole Protestant group. So from the beginning our emphasis has been on serving the total community. Notwithstanding this, there has been an increase rather than a lessening of sectarian competition.

There were three churches in Broadus five years ago, the Roman Catholic, the Open Bible, and our own Congregational-Christian. We found in our Roman Catholic neighbors honorable competitors. We conceded the necessity of allowing for a Pentecostal group, for funda-

mentalism still cuts a wide swath in the frontier town. But, with total disregard for comity planning, two more churches have been established, a Lutheran and a Baptist. Thus once again the pathetic drama of overchurching in a small town is playing itself out.

There are other unsolved problems. Psychological barriers still exist between some neighborhood groups within the parish, and what an obstruction these can be! To illustrate, one of our closest worshiping centers in terms of miles finds it the hardest to accept the parish idea and has withheld its wholehearted cooperation. By contrast, the people of one of the most distant points in our parish see their salvation in the all-parish idea and share enthusiastically; this latter group has supplied our parish council presidents for the last two years. These contrasting attitudes can perhaps be explained though not condoned. Certainly the hope for our church is in our togetherness and in a united witness.

V

What are some reflections after five years in this so-called "marginal" field?

One is that this has been a tremendously worthwhile effort. Here we have had the privilege of close and intimate fellowship with our parishioners. There has been the sort of response that comes only when there is an earnest desire on the part of a community of Christians to make their church vital. We have experienced the joy of seeing men changed after they lost themselves in the task of the church. We have watched quiet people with latent talents suddenly blossom under newly assigned responsibility in the church. We have seen faithful people discover new dimensions through Christian fellowship with their neighbors.

I think of one good lady who, after a worship service in a single-room country schoolhouse, came up and shook my hand warmly and said in utter sincerity: "You know, Reverend, I just love to come to church; it makes me feel so damned good!" Would that we all could communicate our thoughts so effectively.

I have the feeling that a similar awakening, as has occurred here, could take place in hundreds of other rural centers in our country. We know that the same potential is not found in all places. But where the parish is small, where the minister can enjoy direct and personal contact with each member of the congregation, and where there is a concerted effort on the part of both the local congregation and the larger denomination, an awakening can take place. Of this I am convinced.

While the per capita cost of ministering in such an area is high, I am sure it is good investment. Achievements in such small churches can be comparable with those of churches with larger membership.

Finally, I would note that my confidence in human nature has been strengthened by this experience. For the most part people are responsive when they feel they can be part of a genuinely creative effort; and the expression of the Christian life is a creative activity. People hunger to be involved in meaningful and significant work.

To me this hunger has become especially evident in our rural churches. The hunger is so deep and so urgent. Would that there were more trained ministers willing and eager to turn their efforts to serving in marginal churches!

—Reprinted, with permission, from The Chicago Theological Seminary *Register*

The feeblest churches are in the most destitute districts. So that without cooperation the greatest burdens often rest on the weakest churches. If now the churches of a country will organize and cooperate to the discharge of their responsibility to the whole county, the work can be so divided as to adapt the burden to the strength of each.

—Josiah Strong, "Two Great Principles," *The New Era*, 1893.

Ten Color Films on "Acts of the Apostles"

• The history of the early church is impressively depicted in a new series of ten motion pictures, in sound and color, based on the Book of *Acts*. The series, "Acts of the Apostles," has been produced by Family Films in its Hollywood studios, for Broadman Films, under the supervision of the Rev. Earl Waldrup. The series was directed by Edward Dew.

The latest addition to religious teaching films will fill a long-felt gap in the resources that visualize the life and actions of the early Christians. The series depicts not only the major historical events, such as the preaching of Peter at Pentecost, the conversion of Saul at Tarsus, Peter's rooftop vision, and the expansion of the early Christian Church into the Gentile world, but special emphasis is given to the spiritual power that made these early Christians dynamic witnesses for Christ.

"Acts of the Apostles" is available through religious film distribution centers served by the Family Films' international organization. The company's office moved recently to its own studios at 5823 Santa Monica Boulevard, Hollywood 38, California.

• You remember the ancient quip about the school teacher who asked, "What is in our world today that wasn't here fifty years ago?" Imagine her surprise when the irrepressible Johnny piped up, "Me!" Well, Johnny had something. And the world had something too—Johnny! A Johnny that was different from all the million of Johnnies ever born. If God made us different it's foolish to try to be someone or something other than one's natural self.

Be yourself. Quit posing as someone other than yourself. "Stir up the gift that is within you." Be natural. Only thus can you make your greatest contribution.

—Gaston Foote, in *Footnotes* (Fleming H. Revell Co.)

Gustav Anderson from A. Devaney, N. Y.

Building on One Level - or More*

• In considering either a new building or the expansion of an old one most congregations begin by assuming a basement. For many years, this was the customary first step in church enlargement. To many minds, churches and basements go together like the two sides of a coin.

Over against the blind following of the habit of the past, congregations need to face the various factors involved in the decision to build on one level or on two.

First of these are the legal and moral obligations. States vary in their requirements. Ohio has specific regulations for church basements. If completely in the ground, basements can be used only for storage and utilities. For other purposes, the maximum depth permitted is eight feet, or 50 per cent of the height of the room. Many states have laws limiting "rooms used for educational purposes" to a depth of three or four feet, and Wisconsin interprets this to include churches. In several states, the present practice is to refuse state approval to public school plans with any basement rooms whatever.

In most parts of the country, the churches can get around these restrictions. By labeling the basement as a play area rather than church school space they can often secure approval for their plans. But is there not a moral obligation for the church to be as careful of the health and safety of the children who come to it on Sunday as the state is on Monday.

There are also compelling practical considerations for the one-level church.

The deeper a church puts its lower level in the ground the less attractive will this space be. Climbing down into a basement is uninspiring; climbing out again is difficult and may be dangerous. The greatest current need of the churches is rooms for preschool children—and these should never be in a deep basement. The best use for such a room is probably as a rumpus room for young people, but the expense is hardly justified for this purpose alone.

But what about a light, airy basement that is practically out of the ground? This brings us to the other horn of our dilemma. If the first floor is only a few feet below grade, what happens to the floor above it? The better the basement, the higher people must climb to reach the next level. Usually it is the place of worship. The aged are on the increase. Children who have grown up in modern one-story homes have had little experience climbing stairs.

A side-hill location is the best argument for a two-level church. If ground level entrances can be had to both floors the interior stairway is no longer an exit subject to safety requirements, but simply a means of communication. Where this is possible, money can commonly be saved.

Now let us turn our attention to the economy of one-level construction.

Today practically all schools and commercial buildings are constructed with the slab floor right on the ground. A trench is dug below the frost line, which varies from eighteen inches to three or more feet in different parts of the country. In this trench is put the "footing" or foundation. Between the footings is placed a layer of gravel, usually washed. On top of this is some sand, and then poured concrete. Aside from the conduit for the utilities,

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there is no air space beneath the floor, which is supported by the good earth. This is the greatest building economy which recent years have brought. Curiously, a floor resting immediately on the ground is warmer than one with an air space beneath it. Heating can be either in the floor or in a baseboard panel around the wall. This type of construction has proved satisfactory for schools and even homes—and there is no upkeep.

So long as a floor is approximately at ground level the problem of getting in and out is simple and inexpensive. A door can be put in wherever it is wanted.

In its *Economy Handbook* the Commission on School Buildings of the State of New York makes the following statements:

"One-story buildings offer the following advantages which tend to reduce construction costs:

"1. Costly stairways and the space they occupy are eliminated.

"2. Lighter and less costly construction is possible; less fire-resistive construction is permitted since children can get out of a one-story building readily.

"3. There is more flexibility in laying out the building and in meeting area requirements without waste of space.

"4. In general, fewer toilets and other sanitary facilities are needed."

Over against the savings enumerated must be put the cost of additional roofing. For a one-level building this is not twice the cost of that for a two-level building as the space needed for stairways, stairwells, and some corridors is eliminated. Our fathers had much trouble with roofs and found it desirable to limit them in area. Today we build our roofs without gables, valleys, and other complications, and have little difficulty with them. Roofs are about the cheapest feature of modern buildings. For a church, the more roof there is in proportion to the wall, the greater the economy.

In the past, heating a spread-out building was difficult. Today this situation has changed in two ways. Thanks to the use of fans and pumps, heat can be directed horizontally with great efficiency, while the development of automatic controls and the use of oil and gas for fuel have made small units relatively more economical than large ones —as the schools are finding out. Small heaters take up surprisingly little space, are subject to less stringent safety requirements, and eliminate much piping. The day of heat ducts' disfiguring a church and at the same time transmitting every sound is about over.

The greatest argument for the one-story church is its flexibility. Rooms can be used in conjunction with each other much more easily than rooms on two floors. This is particularly true when a social event follows a religious one, such as a coffee hour after a Sunday service, a reception after a wedding.

The climactic reason for a one-level church is that it can be built a room at a time, should this be necessary, and that it can be added to whenever new needs or additional means appear. For a two-level structure this is most difficult. The framework must be erected and the necessary stairs put in as one operation. Because of the rigidity produced by stairs and corridors, to enlarge a multi-story building is most difficult —as many congregations have learned. The burdensome debts of the past were in large part due to the seeming necessity "to do the whole thing" at once. A by-product of this urge was over-size churches and educational buildings in which some rooms have had little or no use. On one floor there is no occasion for going beyond demonstrated needs. If the money runs out, rooms can be omitted without ruining the entire layout, while these same gaps can be taken care of when funds are

(*Continued on Page* 13)

Luoma Photo

What a Farm Scarcity Might Cost Us

RAYMOND W. MILLER

• The world moves on the wings of ideas.

Civilization developed only after someone had discovered that an earthen jar could be used to store cereals. When food could be stored from one season until the next, then the latent abilities within man were unleashed for the development of cities, and literature, art, and sciences began to emerge.

Much of the world today is still on a field-to-mouth diet, where the hard-pressed farmers themselves grow scarcely enough food to feed their own families. Until 1955, there were few warehouses, elevators, or other food-storage facilities in the subcontinent of India, save at the seaports where incoming cereals were stored and thence transported to appropriate hunger areas.

Because of the increased food production of the first five-year plan, India has begun to produce a small surplus of grains on its millions of small farms. As a result, the Indian people, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, are beginning to develop a plan for modern elevators to store millions of bushels of grain in the interior areas. This could be the turning point in the economic history of India.

The production of food and fiber is the basis of civilization; but when it is the *only* occupation with which man can concern himself, then economic development is tragically slow or even nonexistent.

We in the United States have gone through all of the stages of agricultural production. We have progressed from the days when 13 farm families produced enough surplus to feed 1 urban family, until today the figures are reversed.

Since 1800, America has, fortunately, never known the threat of national hunger. Individuals have been poverty stricken and hungry, but, nevertheless, at the time there was plenty of food in the nation available for their use. The real problems were in the fields of distribution, marketing, employment, and social security. In all of these areas, we have made rapid progress since 1900; and for the next century at least, it is impossible to envision hunger in America. Because of this, Americans are free to live a life of increasing time for avocations, vacations, literature, recreation, science, art, hobbies, fashions, traveling, and the thousand-and-one niceties of life of which others can only dream and still others have never heard.

All of this does not mean that we should not be concerned with farm surpluses. It does mean that a designed farm surplus is a national asset rather than a national nuisance or calamity. It is far better to have a moderate surplus of food and fiber available than it is to take a chance of America being even temporarily hungry or lacking in clothing. It is always better to have too much than too little when it comes to food and fiber.

Barring war, we need have no fear of a food shortage in the United States, meaning that about 90 per cent of our people can devote their lives to other than agricultural activities. Part of this free time has been translated into economic and scientific developments whereby the primary producer has surplus days to live as well as to make a living.

All of which does not mean, of course, that we can afford to waste our resources. This writer is a strong believer in conservation. In 1953 I proposed an "acres for tomorrow" plan with payments going only for soil-conservation purposes and on a voluntary basis. There was nothing new about this. The idea had been talked about for a generation. However, the time for it was ripe.

Today America has its soil bank law, which probably goes too far because it has fallen into the field of politics and away from the original idea of conservation. However, out of it good will come. We must recognize that in any event no plan should ever be adopted by which America will have only a minimum of food and fiber needs.

If we are to continue to develop as a great civilizing force in the world, we shall always need the cushion of enough available food and fiber in the fields, warehouses, stores, and pantries to remove from our citizens the possibility and fear of inadequate supply.

An abundance of food and fiber is an asset, rather than a liability, but there are limits to which surpluses should be accumulated often at the expense of poor land practices. However, a stockpile of the products of the soil for the use of man is of the utmost national importance. This seems to be well recognized by both political parties.

Even a casual reading of the debates in Congress this last spring gives the impression that Congress and the Department of Agriculture are both aware that something must be done to conserve the soil, and to provide agricultural products for home use and for export. However, there has been too little appreciation of the basic facts in the case.

The city man is being educated to the thought that the farmers are getting a free ride and the costs of his food and clothing are resultantly going up. It might be well, from a public relations point of view, for him to be presented with the question as to what he would do if he could not secure enough food and raiment.

The present urban and industrial areas of America are utterly dependent upon a prolific and continuing supply of products in the back country. For instance, New England has only a few days' food supply ahead.

In case of even a limited thermonuclear war, it might well be that the continuation of our system of life and government could depend upon a few extra million bushels of grain stored on the farms and in terminal elevators, a few million bales of cotton on the levees, a few extra million livestock on the ranges. All might mean the difference between a decent standard and a substandard of living for us, if the ter-

ror of war descended on North America.

As long as there is the possibility of a war being fought in the twentieth century, the greatest bulwark of defense is a "surplus of food and fiber" coupled with land practices that will guarantee a continuation of a constant supply from our acres.

On trips to countries abroad, I have been questioned time and time again by responsible leaders who ask, "Why are you people afraid of food? Do you not realize that without it you might be brought to surrender in a matter of days, when with it you could continue indefinitely?"

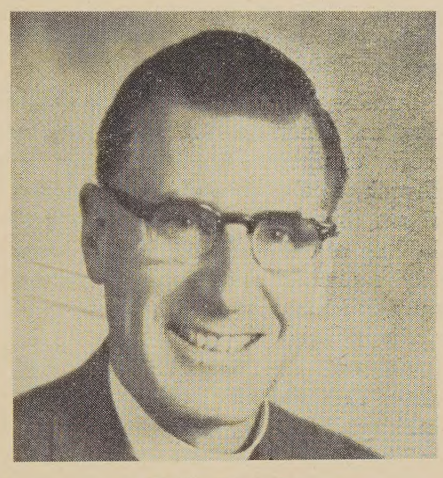
During the last war, the enemy almost succeeded in bringing Britain to her knees, not through firepower or bombing of her cities, but through the destruction of the food boats from the seven seas. Britain made up her mind that she would never be caught in such a threatening situation again.

Following the war, the food production of Britain was increased by a sizeable percentage. Also, she has plans and specifications ready to throw all land into high-gear production at a moment's notice. In fact, there is a law being enforced in Britain today that unless land is brought into production in a way to help the national effort, the owners may be dispossessed and the State empowered to sell it to those who can and will use it for the production of food.

One finds wheat grown in practically every densely populated country of the world—made possible by government subsidy. The governments want the people of those countries to become accustomed to growing wheat in times of peace that they may have farmers who know how to grow wheat in time of war. These nations are paying a subsidy price for wheat, higher in proportion than it is costing us in the United States to carry our farm program.

America has the soil resources whereby it can provide ample agricultural products for its present population and for the next century. It can export to other parts of the world a surplus beyond its needs and help other people to maintain a better diet. It should recognize that farmers must be agriculturists and not miners. It should look upon food and fiber not only for their immediate value to the nation and the world, but for their possible emergency use if war should come.

—Reprinted, with permission, from the *Progressive Farmer*



Philip H. Steinmetz

Time, Talent and Treasure

• Everyone has some time, talent and treasure. We each have the same amount of time each day. Our talents and treasures differ, but we each have ample opportunities to use them, and it is what use we make of them that matters far more than how much we have to use.

The Christian recognizes that all of his time, his talents, and his treasures belong to God and that he is simply a steward.

When someone comes into your house and lives as your guest for a while, you notice how they treat your things. We who are living in God's house should stop and think whether we are using his things as he would wish—with due concern for the future. This applies to land for farming, to materials, to time and money, as well as to what we do with our natural skills.

If you wonder about your purpose in life, look for it in the record of your stewardship.

—Philip Humason Steinmetz

Special Issue on Church Vocations

• The January, 1957 issue of the *International Journal of Religious Education*, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., is all about church vocations. The purpose of the issue is to "help parents, youth, school counselors, and church leaders get the subject of 'church vocations' out on the table where it can be dealt with candidly, informatively, and wisely." Elmer Million, of the Department of the Ministry, served as co-editor of this number of the periodical of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches.

Protestant Ban in Colombia May Be Eased

• Word from the U.S. State Department that the government of Colombia is "reconsidering" its ban on Protestant missionary activity in large rural areas of the country has been welcomed by the National Council of Churches' Department of Religious Liberty.

Dr. Reuben E. Nelson, New York, speaking as vice-chairman of the department, commented that the reopening of some twenty or more churches in the so-called "mission territories" of Colombia would seem an "indispensable" first step toward any practical solution of the long-standing issue.

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more abundant. With a one-story building there is no cause for a congregation to plunge deeply into debt. It invites a pay-as-you-go procedure —and the experience is that one-story churches may be added to in as little as two years after their completion. For a growing situation this is ideal.

We have been assuming that there is enough ground available so that a church can be built or can expand on one level. Often this is not the case. In such instances a congregation should explore the possibility of securing adjacent property or of moving to a more adequate site.

"Love Made Visible"

(The story of the Americus Work Camp in Kansas)

LOTA JO ECHOLS

• A Pennsylvania car with six passengers wearied from nearly 1100 miles and twenty-seven hours on the road, a two-hour late train bringing a girl from Chicago, a speedy airplane trip from Cleveland for one fellow and an 150-mile trip pedaled on a bicycle by another fellow from Zenith, Kansas—such were part of the cavalcade which began its slow stream into the sleepy little town of Americus, Kansas, one hot Saturday this past July. And when the last traveler arrived later in the week, there were assembled twenty young people—twelve girls and eight fellows—ready to share work, heat, dirt, and fun together in service to Christ.

From six states they had come, with differing backgrounds, ages and education. With a range in age from fifteen to twenty-seven among them, a few were still in high school, some in college. All five of the United Presbyterian colleges had representatives among their number. Several had graduated from high school or college and were out in the "cold, cruel world" earning their living. For many of them, the time they were to spend in this little town meant the whole of their vacation for the year.

They had come together for a work camp, which in two short weeks was to accomplish a $5,000 remodeling project on the United Presbyterian Church in Americus. Under the leadership and guidance of work boss Roy McCoy, a farmer-carpenter from Boicourt, Kansas, they were setting out to do tasks usually undertaken by professionals. Here the motto of all work camps, "Love Made Visible," was again to be put into action.

Miss Lizzie Seegar of the Americus Church opened up her three bedrooms, filled with cots and beds fitted tightly side by side, for the girls' sleeping quarters while she herself slept on the back porch on a cot. The kitchen, too, was turned over completely for the entire work camp to eat their meals there together. The boys slept in the home of another member of the congregation, Miss Margaret Lowe.

Quite a Job?

Sunday, July 29th, was the first full day in Americus for most of the work campers. That morning in church, as the young people looked about them, they had the first real inkling of the work ahead. On Monday morning when the hammers, saws, ladders, and paintbrushes (and a little later some blisters, tired backs, and feet) made their appearance, the inkling was no more an inkling. This was it! !

The exterior of the old building had been covered with bricks which, as years went by, began to buckle. Two by four planks had been nailed across them in an attempt to prevent them from falling down entirely and exposing the boards beneath to the weather. Now the bricks were nearly all torn down in preparation for the complete shingling job which was to be done. It was obvious that the bases of the starkly naked boards had been and still were a favorite haven of termites. All this had to be sawed and dug out, de-termited with powerful spray, and then replaced with new lumber.

The interior of the church posed several problems. At the front were two unused doors, which were to be boarded up and covered with lathe, nailed on tediously piece by piece, so that the plasterers could cover them. Scaffolding had to be put up and moved from place to place to paint the very high ceiling. The windows, doors, woodwork, floor, and sections of the wall were all waiting for two coats of paint to brighten and beautify their present drab state. Pews had to be repaired and painted with painstaking care.

Yes, it was quite a job! And two weeks seemed a short time to do it in. One work camper was heard to comment: "This church didn't look so large when we first came in, but the longer I look, the larger it seems to grow!"

Well Steered

No camp or other organization would get along well without someone to tie up all the little—and big—ends which will insist on popping out here and there. The director of the Americus work camp was Joe Barr, from Liberty, Nebraska. Joe, a Tarkio alumnus and June graduate from Pittsburgh-Xenia Seminary in Pittsburgh, was an old hand at work camps, having spent part of the previous summer at one in Egypt.

Upon his shoulders and Roy's fell the responsibility for the camp—his for management and Roy's for the actual work. Roy possessed the even temper so necessary for a good work boss, he never seemed to get disturbed over anything or even annoyed at the people who kept asking him, "What'll I do next?"

That first Sunday evening, Joe called a meeting to organize the campers into four committees: Worship, Study, Recreation, and Food. The heads of these four committees along with Roy and Joe made up the Steering Committee.

Chuck Kimble, a Sterling graduate from Washington, Pa., was the head of the Worship Committee. The Study Committee was headed by Viola Miller, a native of Cincinnati, Ohio. The Recreation Committee was under the leadership of Jerry Sternad of Cleveland, Ohio.

Under this committee's guidance, the campers had a combined picnic and swim, sponsored a community stunt night in the park, and had a free night to enjoy recreation of their own choosing.

Lota Jo Echols, a Steubenville, Ohio girl, was heard to say to Joe, "Weeellllllll, yes, I did have three Home Ec courses at Muskingum—but they were mostly in sewing!" And, later, in a very weak moment, "Weeeeellllll, yes, I suppose I could help a little with planning the menus." Presto! Joe had appointed the head of the Food Committee.

he soon found the "helping a little" neant planning menus, ordering ood, assigning daily K.P.s (the dish-vashing crew—fellows included) and ooks (two each day), and general esponsibility for the kitchen.

Cooking for this hungry gang was quite an undertaking. The two cooks had to tumble out of bed in time o have breakfast on the table by six o'clock.

Work, Play, Worship, Study

Projects undertaken by a work camp are not done for a community but *with* them. Each day men, women and young people flocked not only from Americus but also from as far distant as fifty miles and more to the church to work. All were invited to dinner, and thus the tables (boards on saw horses) in Aunt Lizzie's front yard fairly bulged with anywhere from thirty to fifty people each noon. Supper guests usually swelled the work camp "family," too.

A work day began at seven o'clock and ended in time for six o'clock supper with short but welcome mid-morning and mid-afternoon breaks. The early starting hour came as a surprise to several in the community. One man who arrived at eight o'clock the first morning of work scratched his head and remarked in surprise, "I sure didn't figure you kids would get up very early. But here I find I'm the one who's late!"

Wherever young people congregate, a lot of shenanigans may be expected—work camp is no exception. From water battles down the line, fun was a byword with this high-spirited group. And how they loved to sing! Working, playing, and worshipping, they sang. They made the church hum with hymns and choruses as they went about their work, and occasionally at Aunt Lizzie's they sat around until near midnight for a songfest while Jane Wherry, from Tecumseh, Nebraska, strummed her ukelele in accompaniment to the old favorites and hymns. A neighbor paid the supreme compliment when she commented to the Rev. Mr. Humphreys, "If they're going to sing, I have just one request. Please tell them to sing louder!"

Worship was an even more important part of camp life. Personal devotions were held during the "Quiet time" between breakfast and work. Group devotions were usually led after lunch, when visitors could participate in the fellowship of prayer as well as the fellowship of work. Each evening the group, refreshed by baths taken at homes in the community, met together for an hour of Bible study and discussion, led by Joe. The emphasis of this was upon the sacredness of work when done in the service of the Lord.

By Friday, repairs were nearly done, the plasterers had finished most of their patching jobs, part of the shingles and most of the first coats of paint were on. Bible study was held after lunch, and Friday night was declared *a free night!* Campers scattered in all directions after supper.

Flu Bug Works, Too

The first hint of disaster came when three campers returning home that night became sick at their stomachs. A few others didn't feel well. By four o'clock Saturday morning everyone at Aunt Lizzie's and Margaret's was wide awake, with over half of them ill in some degree. At daybreak Dr. Beam, the local physician, was called in to ease the discomfort of some ten or twelve who had picked up a summer flu bug.

Only a few work campers were able to go to the church, and it seemed that work that day must come to a standstill. But God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. A large group came in from another town for the day, and while the convalescent ones spent the day at Margaret's away from sight or smell of food, the work progressed as usual. One of the day's heroes was Daisy Cole, from Amoret, Kan., who saw a need and unassumingly and efficiently filled it by taking over the responsibility of the kitchen.

Sunday found nearly all the afflicted well on the road to recovery. Several went to other communities to participate in church services. Those who remained in Americus were invited that evening to attend and help with the first meeting of the newly organized Methodist Youth Fellowship. After this, it may be noted, several of the MYF young people came to help with the work at the U.P. Church. Thus are denominational boundaries broken down, as all work together in the common purpose of serving Christ.

The Closing Days

As the days wore into the second week, the second coats of white paint went onto the outside woodwork, the window frames, and the ceiling, the shingling process also continued. The walls in the back of the church sported brand new pink paint, and the scrubbed floor received two coats of brown paint. Finally, the pews were all that remained to be done. The painstaking job of repairing them and then painting them green with white and brown trim took three days. Saturday night, a tired group went back to the church after supper to wax the pews, and then—somehow it was over.

Sunday morning the campers arose early and put on jeans and shirts to go again to the church; but this time they were not going to work. Now they were going to take Communion together, led by the Rev. Mr. Humphreys. A little group who two weeks before had been strangers to one another now were tightly knit by the bonds of the experience in Christian fellowship.

That evening they returned to the church for the last time, for a covered dish supper with the congregation and for the dedication service. As they filed inside and looked about them, they could well be proud of the changes wrought there.

During the service, individuals representing the congregation, the community, and the work camp respectively, told what work camp had meant to them personally. Following the custom of many work camps, the campers presented a gift to the church. They chose to give twenty-six copies of the new hymnal, *The Hymnbook*. There were many damp eyes and lumpy throats as congregation and campers formed a friendship circle to sing the doubly meaningful "'Til We Meet Again."

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BOOK REVIEW

Farmer at the Cross Roads. By Ezra T. Benson, as told to Carlisle Bargaron. Devin Adair Company, York. 1956. $2.50.

Ezra Benson here presents his "agricultural testament." It is his witness respecting matters ultimate and his position on many immediate issues that are encountered in the market place of public opinion.

As nearly every one knows, Mr. Benson became Secretary of Agriculture after being a high official of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He thinks that the U.S.A. is not "just another nation," but rather one raised up by the God of Heaven and given "a divine mission to perform for liberty-loving people everywhere."

But freedom is maintained only by eternal vigilance on the part of the people who possess it. In order to remain free, people must not rely on the state for their sustenance. The "free market place" for the products of man's toil implements the basic freedom of mankind.

Farmers should eventually have full parity prices by means of the free market place. This objective cannot be attained, says the Secretary, by the government programs alone. It can be achieved by high general employment and production, by stable prices, and by increasing output per worker in the whole economy.

Research and education are the most important means of improving the farmers' economic situation. This program emphasis, with freedom, has already enabled farmers so to produce as to "provide the American people with the highest level of living in the world." Thus there should be "limited" price supports.

The family farm needs the government's protection, but it should not have the degree of protection that prevents shifts in production so as to assure a well-balanced supply for effective demand.

Mr. Bargaron contributes a short biography of Secretary Benson, referring to his career in both church and state.

—Benson Y. Landis

Churches Join in Sending 44 Heifers to Turkey

• Forty-four heifers flew to Turkey in January under the auspices of Heifer Project Inc., thanks to the cooperation of the Laymen's Fellowship of the Congregational Christian Churches and the Churchmen's Brotherhood of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Walter A. Graham, national director of the Laymen's Fellowship, said that the air shipment was the first joint aid project of the two denominations which are planning to merge this year. Twenty per cent of the heifers, he said, will be given to refugees and needy villagers in Turkey.

A recent report from Heifer Project Inc., the interdenominational agency which works in cooperation with Church World Service, relief department of the National Council of Churches, shows a record year in 1956. Eighty-four shipments of livestock, poultry and hatching eggs went to twenty-three countries, including the Soviet Union.

The shipments to underdeveloped areas and war-ruined countries help people in those countries to reestablish their farm economies and in many cases contribute to improving stock and introducing new strains.

Included in the 1956 shipments were 880 cattle, 507 goats, 72,600 chicks, 561 sheep, 399 pigs, 500 ducklings, 25 burros and 8,800 hatching eggs.

The most controversial shipment was the gift of 55 dairy cattle to the Soviet Union. They were donated by church and farm people in the United States who believed that the gift would help improve relations between the people of the two countries. The Soviet Government paid all transportation expenses as well as the return fare of the three American volunteer "cowboys" who escorted their charges across the Atlantic.

Other shipments went for the first time last year to Borneo, Gaza, Jordan, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

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The evening wound up at the home of Leslie Stewart where the campers were invited for refreshments after the service. There they sang more of their favorite choruses before they knelt to pray in their closing devotions. As the last goodbyes were said and the campers prepared to leave for their homes, each one knew that he or she had been changed in some way, that an indelible mark, no matter how large or small, had been made upon each life, as a result of these two weeks in which love had indeed been made visible.

In the words of one camper: "As I think back over my time here, two things stand out in my mind. . . . First, you cannot witness for Christ without experiencing spiritual growth for yourself . . . second, fellowship has been just a word to me. Now that I have shared in the reality of work side by side with you and you and you, however, as we have labored together to beautify the house of God, fellowship in Christ is no mere word—it is *real!*"

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On All Types of Cooperatives

• Concise information on all types of cooperatives in the United States is found in Fact Book on Cooperatives (Chicago 4, Ill., Cooperative League of the U.S.A., 1956. 75 cents; rates on quantities). Developments in recent years, with special note taken of events in 1956, are recorded for such as credit unions, "cooperative-oriented" insurance companies, and cooperatives in farm marketing, rural electrification, farm supply, consumer goods, housing, health. There is chapter on student cooperatives.

The larger or regional organizations are duly listed and statistics for them given. A short list of books and pamphlets is included. The Farmer Cooperative Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture furnished many of the figures on cooperatives among farmers.